The trial went on. The political prisoners said that the "patriots" were traitors. The leaders of the "patriots" replied in a collective letter. "There are different kinds of people among us," they wrote, "but none of us ever had any tie with revolutionary parties. If fear of death means cowardice, we are cowards. But we have betrayed nothing, denounced nobody. We have made a poll among ourselves. Out of eighty-eight of us, seventy-three have children, more than two hundred children in all. You must understand and forgive us. Our only guilt is that we are weak and frightened."

This letter provoked heated controversy among the political prisoners. Most of them considered it a piece of despicable hypocrisy. The leader of the "rebels," a big coal miner, Tkachenko, wrote a message that was also circulated in the prison. "In our case," he wrote, "revolutionaries have been mingled with persons who have no allegiance to the revolution. The latter are entitled to fight for their lives according to their own standards. If, by refusing to join them, we have exposed ourselves, we have done this of our free decision."

Shortly before Christmas the court announced the sentence: thirty-two men were sentenced to death, sixty-one to prison for ten years or more, and forty-one were set free. All those sentenced to the gallows were transferred to Death Row in chains and handcuffs. The group consisted of fourteen "patriots" and eighteen "rebels," but the next day the "patriots" were brought back to the common ward and freed of their irons. The "rebels" remained in the death cells. I saw them during their walk in the courtyard. Month after month they waited for execution, and for some of them the strain proved unbearable. Two, and later six others, signed a petition prepared by their lawyers. Their sentences were commuted. But ten Gorlovka men refused to yield. They were hung in the summer of 1910.

THE CASE OF THE 103 ANARCHISTS

The Anarchists' case was another *cause célèbre* in Ekaterinoslav. Between 1905 and 1907 many holdups and other acts of violence were committed in south Russia. The police recorded all of them as "anarchy," but few culprits were caught. On the other hand, the prisons were full of persons suspected of being Anarchists. An ambitious investigating attorney, Shpiganovsky, conceived the idea of allocating the unsolved cases of anarchy among the suspects. He extorted confessions from two or three prisoners and enrolled two others as supporting court's witnesses to confirm the police records.